

Children, Youth and Families Education and Research Network

FY 2009 Request for Applications

APPLICATION DEADLINE: December 16, 2008



U.S. Department of Agriculture



Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

**COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE;
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES EDUCATION AND RESEARCH NETWORK

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.500.

DATES: Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on December 16, 2008 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will not be considered for funding. Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is requesting comments regarding this RFA from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the program. Such comments will be used to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current RFA from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education and extension for use in formulating future RFAs for competitive programs. Comments should be submitted as provided for in the DATES portion of this Notice.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy and Oversight Branch; Office of Extramural Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; USDA; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: RFP-OEP@csrees.usda.gov. (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the Children, Youth and Families Education and Research Network RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CSREES requests applications for the Children, Youth and Families Education and Research Network (CYFERnet) for fiscal year (FY) 2009 to marshal resources of the Land-Grant and Cooperative Extension Systems so that, in collaboration with other organizations, they can develop and deliver educational programs that equip limited resource families and youth who are at risk for not meeting basic human needs with the skills they need to lead positive, productive, contributing lives. CSREES anticipates the amount available for support of this program in FY 2009 will be approximately \$550,000.

This notice identifies the objectives for CYFERnet projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a CYFERnet grant. CSREES additionally requests stakeholder input from any interested party for use in the development of the next RFA for this program.

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

Funding for CYFERnet is authorized under section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act of May 8, 1914, as amended (7 U.S.C. 341, *et seq.*). Section 7403 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (FCEA) of 2008 amends section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 (7 U.S.C. 343(d)) in regards to eligibility. The eligibility to compete for CYFAR funding is broadened to include 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, including Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University. Eligibility is also provided to the University of the District of Columbia.

B. Purpose and Priorities

CYFERnet is a multi-institution, cross-disciplinary network that provides seamless access to program, evaluation, and technology resources and technical assistance for all Children, Youth, and Families at Risk (CYFAR) university and community-based programs for at-risk children and families. While achieving CYFERnet objectives, lead institutions are the responsibility tasks are implemented by lead institutions in collaboration with other institutions and networks under subcontracts.

CYFERnet is not centered in Washington, DC or in individual States; it is distributed throughout the Cooperative Extension System and includes faculty from 4-H Youth Development, Family Consumer Sciences, Community Development, Communications Technology, other university departments, and CSREES, USDA. Partnering universities pool resources into a "national network of expertise" working collaboratively to assist communities in developing and sustaining holistic programs for children, youth, and families at-risk.

Employing Internet technology to expedite intellectual collaboration across institutions, CYFERnet staff has nationwide responsibility and all CYFERnet programs and products are available to all institutions. This collaboration is institutionalized within the Cooperative Extension System to ensure that support to educational programs for children, youth, and families who live in high-risk environments will continue over the long term.

CYFERnet Objectives – 2009

The goal of CYFERnet is to provide an Internet-based network of program, technology, and evaluation resources and technical assistance to university and community programs for at-risk children, youth, and families organized around the five CYFAR National Outcomes for Early Childhood, School Age, Teen, Parent/Family, and Community.

CYFERnet-Program Objective: Provide program support to CYFAR university and community programs.

- A. Support Editorial Boards for Early Childhood, School Age, Teen, Parent/Family, and Community to:
 - (1) Recruit and retain diverse editorial board members with expertise and experience in critical and emerging issues
 - (2) Identify, review, and publish program and training resources for CYFAR programs based on user feedback, needs assessments, and recommendations from editorial board members, among other sources. A needs and assets assessment of current CYFERnet resources was recently conducted: http://ag.arizona.edu/fcs/cyfernet/evaluation/cyfernet_assessment_intro_sheet.htm
 - (3) During FY2009 provide research-based web training on resources for each CYFAR outcome;
- B. Support collaborations with relevant youth and family development projects (such as 4-H Programs of Distinction, 4-H 101, 4-H Military Liaisons, eXtension, Access 4-H, National 4-H Learning Institute, National Directory of 4-H Materials, Federal Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs, etc.) to meet priority CYFAR program needs.
- C. Support opportunities to convene through electronic forums with children, youth, and families at risk programming innovators and researchers to discuss current and future trends.
- D. Participate in a CYFERnet work group that identifies common issues and needs across CYFAR sites.

CYFERnet-Technology Objective: Provide technology support to CYFAR university and community programs.

- A. Provide technical assistance to CYFAR university and community programs:
 - (1) Address technology access issues for at-risk audiences and communities;
 - (2) Provide training in technology use and promote new technology applications;
 - (3) Support communication among CYFAR project technology staff; and
 - (4) Create the infrastructure, technical assistance, and support needed to form online communities of practitioners, researchers, and others in the CYFAR community to network, collaborate, and learn.
- B. Model technology applications for CYFAR programs, including:
 - (1) Information organization, management, and delivery;
 - (2) Interactive, technology-based education for youth and adult program participants; and
 - (3) Professional development opportunities for CYFAR staff.
- C. Support CYFAR program reporting through the continued support, development and maintenance of the CYFAR on-line reporting system. Work with CSREES staff to revise the on-line reporting format for 2009 CYFAR projects.
- D. Collaborate with National 4-H Headquarters, USDA on youth technology initiatives.

E. Participate in a CYFERnet work group that identifies common issues and needs across CYFAR sites.

CYFERnet-Evaluation Objective: Conduct evaluation of CYFAR program impacts and provide evaluation resources and assistance to CYFAR university and community programs.

A. Work with a CYFAR Sustainable Community Projects (SCP) Evaluation Task Force identified by CSREES to develop common indicators across Sustainable Community Projects.

(1) Develop an evaluation plan to address the questions:

- a. What common indicators are being addressed by SCP projects?
- b. What is the feasibility and the extent to which CYFAR SCP can use uniform instruments in their evaluation efforts and allow for data aggregation at the national level?
- c. Using these common indicators – assess how SCPs are accomplishing short term and long term outcomes as articulated in their logic models. What are the impacts of these SCPs on targeted at-risk audiences?

(2) Implement the Evaluation and prepare and submit annual progress reports as well as a final report. A Progress report is due September 2010 and annual progress reports are due every year afterwards. The Final report is due January 2014.

B. Field an updated Organizational Change Survey through a central data collection, analysis, and reporting effort. The purpose of this survey is to determine how well Cooperative Extension is supporting children, youth and family programs in light of budgetary and other constraints as well as indicating areas for improvement. The most recently conducted Organizational Change Survey can be found at the following link:

http://ag.arizona.edu/fcs/cyfernet/cyfar/ocs2005_final.pdf

C. Design and conduct a sustainability study of the CYFAR New Communities Projects (NCP) which completed 5 years of federal funding. Address the questions:

- (1) Are the NCP projects sustaining community based programs for at risk children, youth, and families?
- (2) What are the factors favoring sustainability of community based programs?
- (3) What is the influence of community based and faith based program partnerships in sustainability of CYFAR community programs? Use data primarily from existing year end CYFAR NCP reports and follow-up interviews with state and community-level contacts. Submit reports to CSREES on the following time schedule: Progress report – September 2010 and annual progress reports thereafter; Final report – January 2014.
- (4) From Sustainability Study data, examine the issue of integrating CYFAR programs and young people into 4-H Clubs and programs.

D. Maintain and add new evaluation resources to CYFERnet.org based on user feedback and results from assessments of gaps in content. A needs and assets assessment of current CYFERnet resources was recently conducted:

http://ag.arizona.edu/fcs/cyfernet/evaluation/cyfernet_assessment_intro_sheet.htm

E. Provide online training in evaluation concepts and procedures that will benefit CYFAR program staff. Communicate with CYFAR project evaluators, project directors, and liaisons to ensure that evaluations are moving forward and provide assistance, as appropriate.

F. Collaborate with other national efforts such as eXtension, the National 4-H Learning Priorities Evaluating for Impact team, 4-H Mission Mandates teams, and Access 4-H.

G. Participate in a CYFERnet work group that identifies common issues and needs relative to evaluation across CYFAR sites.

CYFERnet - Program, Evaluation & Technology Objective: Expand use of CYFERnet resources and services by CYFAR and other Cooperative Extension System audiences.

A. Promote CYFERnet resources at designated national conferences such as CYFAR, NAE4-HA, NEAFCS, and NAA and provide information to university and community CYFAR program staff in accessing CYFERnet resources.

B. Provide three in-person CYFAR 2009 Pre-Conference Workshops for CYFAR programs. (One each – technology, evaluation, program).

No graphs, photographs, charts, tables or support letters should be included in this section or as appendices or attachments to the application.

C. Program Description

CYFERnet encompasses three components. In FY 2009, each applicant may only apply for one CYFERnet component.

(a) CYFERnet Program Component

A collaborative, multi-university project to provide web access to research-based, high quality resources, information, and professional development and training opportunities for CYFAR state and community programs for at-risk populations.

(b) CYFERnet Technology Component

A collaborative, multi-university project to provide web infrastructure for materials, resources, and training programs for children, youth, and family programs and to provide support and training in the newest computer and technology applications to state and community CYFAR programs.

(c) CYFERnet Evaluation Component

A collaborative, multi-university project to evaluate the impact of CYFAR-funded programs and provide evaluation resources and assistance to state and community programs for at-risk children, youth, and families.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. CSREES anticipates approximately \$550,000 will be available to fund all CYFERnet applications in FY 2009.

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2009, applications for CYFERnet Program, Technology and Evaluation will be submitted as new applications. Applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

C. Project Types

Applications should be submitted for a 5-year period. CSREES anticipates making continuation awards under this RFA to reduce the administrative burden to the grant applicant. A continuation award is issued for a specific level of effort for a predetermined period of time with a statement of intention to provide additional support at a future date. Continuation of the funding for the award is provided if performance has been satisfactory, appropriations are available for this purpose, and continued support is in the best interests of the Federal government and the public. Applicants are cautioned to request only amounts that can be expended by the end of the project year, since carryover will be subtracted from the following year's request.

Applicants should submit a 5-year work plan detailing short and long-term desired results and a budget and budget narrative for each year. Funding will be awarded one year at a time. CYFERnet projects will also be required to submit a year-end report to the Current Research Information System (CRIS). Continuation funding will be contingent upon Congressional appropriations and submission of a complete year end report and a new budget form and budget narrative for the next year.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by Cooperative Extension at 1890 Land-Grant Institutions, including Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University, at 1862 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, and the University of the District of Columbia. An applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of an application deadline will preclude CSREES from reviewing their application or making an award.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

CSREES does not require matching or cost sharing support for this program, and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria.

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to CSREES in response to this RFA.

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the PD/PI first contact an Authorized Representative (AR)(also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative or AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grant.gov. If the organization is not prepared, the AR should see http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp for steps for preparing to submit applications through Grants.gov.

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. Download and install PureEdge Viewer, a small, free program that provides access to the grant application. See http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#pureedge.
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on “**Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions**,” enter the funding opportunity number USDA-CSREES-SLBCD-001867 in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “[CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov](#).” This Guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If assistance is needed to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating PureEdge forms, using PureEdge with a Macintosh computer), refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

- Grants.gov customer support
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726
Business Hours: Monday through Friday 7:00 am – 9:00 pm Eastern Standard Time
Email: support@grants.gov

See <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared following Part V and VI of the document entitled “[A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.](#)” This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed in order to prepare an application in response to this RFA. If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.

Note the attachment requirements (e.g., portable document format) in Part III section 3. of the Guide. ANY PROPOSALS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM CSREES REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from CSREES review. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business on the closing date in the RFA.

If you do not own PDF-generating software, Grants.gov provides online tools to assist applicants. Users will find a link to “Convert Documents to PDF” on <http://grants.gov/assets/PDFConversion.pdf>.

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

2. R&R Other Project Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 3. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

Field 6. Project Summary/Abstract.

Field 7. Project Narrative.

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Description shall not exceed eight pages of written text. This limit has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition. **No graphs, photographs, charts, or tables will be accepted.** The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

a. CYFERnet Component to which you are applying (i.e., CYFERnet Program, Technology, or Evaluation Component).

b. Project Staff and Lead University

Provide the name, phone number, university affiliation, street and e-mail address of the lead university faculty who will be responsible for implementing CYFERnet objectives.

c. Plan of Work

List each CYFERnet Objective to be implemented in FY 2009 by this CYFERnet component. For each objective, write a narrative plan for how that objective will be achieved, including specific tasks and timeline for execution of the tasks.

d. Collaborators

List collaborating universities/organizations and the contact person's name, address, phone number, and e-mail address.

3. R&R Budget Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 6. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Applications must contain a budget and narrative for each budget period for the entire duration of the proposed project. Annual and cumulative budgets and narratives are required. Reasonable travel costs should be included for the Annual New CYFAR Project Orientation Training and the Annual CYFAR Conference (see Part VI, D.1 and D.2).

4. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 4. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

Current and pending support information is required only for personnel with PD or co-PD(s) indicated as Project Role on the R&R Senior/Key Person Profile. All applications must contain a list of Current and Pending Support detailing public or private support (including in-house support) to which personnel identified in the application have committed portions of their time, whether or not salary support for person(s) involved is included in the budget. **Please note that the project being proposed should be included in the pending section of the form.** Total project time listed for each PD should not exceed 100 percent for concurrent projects.

5. R&R Personal Data – Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 5. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide. **PLEASE DO NOT PROVIDE THE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OF PROJECT DIRECTOR / PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR.**

6. Supplemental Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 1. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 2. Program Code. Enter the program code name “Children, Youth and Families at Risk” and the program code “MC”.

b. Field 8. Conflict of Interest List. A conflict of interest list is required under this program

C. Submission Dates and Times

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by COB on December 16, 2008 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

Correspondence regarding submitted applications will be sent using e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received correspondence **from CSREES** regarding a submitted application within 30 days of submission of the application, please contact the Program Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.**

D. Funding Restrictions

Pursuant to Section 1473 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended, 7 U.S.C. 3319, **indirect costs and tuition remission are not allowable costs under Section 3(d) of Smith-Lever funded projects, and no funds will be approved for this purpose.** Costs that are a part of an institution's indirect cost pool (e.g., administrative or clerical salaries) may not be reclassified as direct costs for the purpose of making them allowable.

Grant funds awarded under this authority may not be used for the renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or Extension space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

E. Other Submission Requirements

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled "A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov."

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

Each application will be evaluated in a 2-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel.

Reviewers will be selected based upon training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) The level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields; (c) the need to include as reviewers other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs; (d) the need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) the need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness to producers and the general public of each application.

B. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria below will be used in reviewing applications submitted in response to this RFA:

CYFERnet-Program: Provide program support to CYFAR university and community programs (100 points).

1. Ability to manage and support Editorial Boards for Early Childhood, School Age, Teen, Parent/Family, and Community (40 points).

This criterion assesses the applicant's ability to manage and support the CYFERnet Editorial Boards. This includes a consideration of the applicant's potential to recruit and retain diverse editorial board members; identify, review, and publish program and training resources; and provide research-based on-line trainings.

2. Ability to support collaborations with relevant youth and family development projects (20 points).

This criterion assesses the applicant's potential for collaboration with other national-level youth and family development projects in order to meet priority CYFAR program needs. This includes the ability of the applicant to collaborate with the other components of CYFERnet (Technology and Evaluation). This also includes the applicant's ability to expand the use of CYFERnet resources and services by CYFAR and other Cooperative Extension System audiences.

3. Key Personnel (40 points).

This criterion relates to the adequacy of the number and qualifications of key persons who will develop and carry out the project, and the qualifications of project personnel who will provide for the assessment of project results and impacts and the dissemination of these findings.

CYFERnet-Technology: Provide technology support to CYFAR university and community programs (100 points).

1. Ability to provide technical assistance to CYFAR university and community programs and to model technology applications (30 points).

This criterion relates to the ability of the application to provide technical assistance to CYFAR programs, including addressing technology access issues, providing training in technology use, supporting communication among CYFAR project technology staff, and creating an infrastructure to form online communities of practice. This includes modeling technology applications for CYFAR programs.

2. Ability to support the CYFAR program reporting system (25 points).

This criterion relates to the ability of the applicant to support CYFAR program reporting through the support, development, and maintenance of the CYFAR on-line reporting system.

3. Ability to support collaborations with relevant youth and family development projects (15 points).

This criterion assesses the applicant's potential for collaboration with other national-level youth and family development projects in order to meet priority CYFAR program needs. This includes the ability of the applicant to collaborate with the other components of CYFERnet (Program and Evaluation). This includes the applicant's ability to expand the use of CYFERnet resources and services by CYFAR and other Cooperative Extension System audiences.

4. Key Personnel (30 points).

This criterion relates to the adequacy of the number and qualifications of key persons who will develop and carry out the project, and the qualifications of project personnel who will provide for the assessment of project results and impacts and the dissemination of these findings.

CYFERnet-Evaluation: Conduct evaluation of CYFAR program impacts and provide evaluation resources and assistance to CYFAR university and community programs (100 points).

1. Ability to carry out a Sustainable Community Projects Common Indicators Evaluation (20 points).

This criterion assesses the applicant's ability to carry out a project which will identify and measure common indicators across CYFAR SCP projects.

2. Ability to field an updated Organizational Change Survey through a central data collection, analysis, and reporting effort (15 points).

This criterion assesses the applicant's ability to update and field an Organizational Change Survey which will examine how well Cooperative Extension is supporting children, youth and family programs in light of budgetary and other constraints.

3. Ability to design and conduct a sustainability study of the CYFAR New Communities Projects (NCP) (20 points).

This criterion assesses the applicant's ability to design and conduct a sustainability study of the CYFAR New Communities Projects (NCP) in order to more fully understand the factors favoring sustainability of community based programs.

4. Ability to provide training and resources to benefit CYFAR state and community program staff (15 points).

This criterion assesses the applicant's ability to provide evaluation training and resources that will benefit CYFAR state and community program staff. The applicant should have the ability to use feedback and results from prior needs assessments to determine current gaps in content on CYFERnet.org as well as to develop online training in evaluation concepts and procedures.

5. Ability to support collaborations with relevant youth and family development projects (15 points).

This criterion assesses the applicant's potential for collaboration with other national-level youth and family development projects in order to meet priority CYFAR program needs. This includes the ability of the applicant to collaborate with the other components of CYFERnet (Program and Technology). This includes the applicant's ability to expand the use of CYFERnet resources and services by CYFAR and other Cooperative Extension System audiences.

6. Key Personnel (15 points).

This criterion relates to the adequacy of the number and qualifications of key persons who will develop and carry out the project, and the qualifications of project personnel who will provide for the assessment of project results and impacts and the dissemination of these findings.

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution shall be determined by reference to the current Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, Virginia 22042. Phone: (703) 532-2300. Web site: <http://www.hepinc.com>.

Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of peer reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

D. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one-time basis with updates on an as needed basis, as part of the responsibility determination prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another CSREES program. CSREES will provide copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors which may exclude an applicant from receiving Federal financial and non-financial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of CSREES shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the awarding official of CSREES as the effective date of the grant shall be no later than September 30 of the Federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. It should be noted that the project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by CSREES under this RFA shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's assistance regulations (2 CFR 215 and 7 CFR 3430).

B. Award Notice

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the following:

- (1) Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the Administrator has issued an award under the terms of this request for applications;
- (2) Title of project;
- (3) Name(s) and institution(s) of PDs chosen to direct and control approved activities;
- (4) Identifying award number assigned by the Department;
- (5) Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the Administrator during the project period;
- (7) Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
- (8) Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
- (9) Applicable award terms and conditions (see <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view CSREES award terms and conditions);

(10) Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

(11) Other information or provisions deemed necessary by CSREES to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several Federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These include, but are not limited to:

2 CFR Part 215—Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations (OMB Circular A-110).

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121—USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

7 CFR Part 3017—USDA implementation of Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and 7 CFR Part 3021—Governmentwide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Grants).

7 CFR Part 3018—USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying. Imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of Federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

7 CFR Part 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non profit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3407—CSREES procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

7 CFR Part 3430—CSREES procedures to implement Competitive and Noncompetitive Nonformula Grant Programs—General Grant Administrative Provisions and Program-Specific Administrative Provisions for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative.

29 U.S.C. 794 (section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 7 CFR Part 15b (USDA implementation of statute) —prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in Federally assisted programs.

35 U.S.C. 200 et seq. —Bayh Dole Act, controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in Federally assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

1. Annual New CYFAR Project Orientation Training

CYFERnet project directors will attend the annual new CYFAR project orientation training in Washington, DC and will be asked to make presentations in support of this training. Reasonable travel expenses should be included as part of the project budget.

2. Annual CYFAR Conference

CYFERnet project directors will be asked to attend the annual CYFAR conference and will be asked to carry out specific support functions for this conference. Reasonable travel expenses should be included as part of the project budget.

3. Annual Performance Report

An Annual Performance Report must be submitted within 90 days after the completion of the first year of the project, and annually thereafter during the life of the grant. Generally, the Annual Performance Reports should include a summary of the overall progress toward programmatic objectives, current problems or unusual developments, and the next year's activities. Annual Performance Reports are to be submitted through the CRIS system described in paragraph 5., below.

4. Final Performance Report

A Final Performance Report must be submitted within 90 days after the expiration date of the grant. The expiration date is specified in the award documents and modifications thereto, if any. Generally, the Final Performance Report should be a summary of the completed activities, including: a review of programmatic objectives and accomplishments; a description of any outcomes resulting from the grant; and the impact of the grant on the CYFAR program overall. The Final Performance Report is to be submitted through the CRIS system described in paragraph 5, below.

5. Current Research Information System (CRIS) Reports

Grantees are required to submit initial grant information and annual and summary reports to CSREES' Current Research Information System (CRIS). The CRIS database contains narrative project information, progress/impact statements, and final technical reports that are made available to the public. For applications recommended for funding, instructions on preparing and submitting project documentation will be provided to the applicant by the agency contact.

Documentation must be submitted to CRIS before CSREES funds will be released. Project reports will be requested by the CRIS office when required. For more information about CRIS, visit <http://cris.csrees.usda.gov>.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact Suzanne Le Menestrel, National Program Leader; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; STOP 2225; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2225; telephone: (202) 720-2297; fax: (202) 720-9366; e-mail: slemenestrel@csrees.usda.gov.

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Access to Review Information

Copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments will be sent to the applicant PD after the review process has been completed.

B. Use of Funds; Changes

1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility

Unless the terms and conditions of the grant state otherwise, the grantee may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of grant funds.

2. Changes in Project Plans

(a) The permissible changes by the grantee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project grant shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other similar aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the grantee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the USDA Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the program contact.

(b) Changes in approved goals or objectives shall be requested by the grantee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests for such changes be approved that are outside the scope of the original approved project.

(c) Changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel shall be requested by the grantee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes.

(d) Transfers of actual performance of the substantive programmatic work in whole or in part and provisions for payment of funds, whether or not Federal funds are involved, shall be requested by the grantee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the grant.

(e) Changes in Project Period: The project period may be extended by CSREES without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) as the ADO determines may be necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed five years. Any extension of time shall be conditioned upon prior request by the grantee and approval in writing by the ADO, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of a grant.

(f) Changes in Approved Budget: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved budget must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to instituting such changes if the revision will involve transfers or expenditures of amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or award.

C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of CSREES transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. The original copy of an application that does not result in an award will be retained by the Agency for a period of three years. Other copies will be destroyed. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

D. Regulatory Information

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

E. Definitions

For the purpose of this program, the following definitions are applicable:

Administrator means the Administrator of CSREES and any other officer or employee of the Department to whom the authority involved is delegated.

Authorized departmental officer means the Secretary or any employee of the Department who has the authority to issue or modify grant instruments on behalf of the Secretary.

Authorized representative means the president, director, or chief executive officer or other designated official of the applicant organization who has the authority to commit the resources of the organization.

Department or USDA means the United States Department of Agriculture.

Peer reviewers means experts or consultants qualified by training and experience in particular field of science, education, or technology to give expert advice on the scientific and technical

merit of grant applications of the relevance of those applications to one or more of the application evaluation criteria. Peer reviewers may be ad hoc or convened as a panel

Project means the particular activity within the scope of the program supported by a grant award.

Project period means the period, as stated in the award document, during which Federal sponsorship begins and ends.

Secretary means the Secretary of Agriculture and any other officer or employee of the Department of Agriculture to whom the authority involved is delegated.

USDA means the United States Department of Agriculture.

Application Submission Checklist

The following checklist has been prepared to assist in ensuring that the application is complete prior to submission:

- ☐ **Have all attachments been submitted in the portable document format (PDF)?** PDF only attachments will be accepted. See Part III of the CSREES Application Guide.
 - Do all submitted PDF documents have one-inch margins and are typed or word processed using no type smaller than 12 point regardless of line spacing? Are all PDF documents numbered sequentially on each page of the attachment? Are all page limitations for a given attachment followed? Submitted applications that do not meet these requirements for PDF attachments will be at risk of being excluded from CSREES review.
- ☐ Have all five required components of the SF 424 Research and Related (R&R) Application Package been completed? Did you use the “Check Package for Errors” feature of the PureEdge viewer (see section 1.8 of the CSREES Application Guide)?
 - ☐ SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet
 - ☐ SF 424 R&R Other Project Information
 - ☐ SF 424 R&R Senior/Key Person (Expanded)
 - ☐ SF 424 R&R Budget
 - ☐ Supplemental Information Form

◆ SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

- Have all required fields been completed?

◆ R&R Other Project Information

- Project Summary/Abstract
Has the Project Summary PDF been attached to this form in Field 6?
Are the names and affiliated organizations of all Project Directors listed at the top of the page in addition to the title of the project?
Does this section adhere to the format?
- Project Narrative
Has the Project Narrative PDF been attached to this form in Field 7?

Is the project fully described?

Does this section adhere to the format and page limitations?

◆ **R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)**

- **Biographical Sketch**

Has the biographical sketch (vitae) PDF for the PD and each co-PD, senior associate, and other professional personnel been attached?

- **Current and Pending Support**

Has the current and pending support PDF for the PD or co-PD(s) been attached?

Have all current and pending projects been listed and summarized, **including this proposal?**

◆ **R&R Personal Data (Optional)** **DO NOT PROVIDE THE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OF THE PROJECT DIRECTOR/PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR.**

- Have all fields been completed except for the social security number?

◆ **R&R Budget**

- Have all fields been completed for each PD and co-PD(s)?

- **Budget Justification**

Has the Budget Justification PDF been attached to this form in Field K?

Are budget items individually justified?

◆ **Supplemental Information Form**

- Does Field 2 indicate the Program Code Name and Program Code?

- **Conflict of Interest List**

Has the Conflict of Interest List PDF been attached to this form in Field 8?

Has a Conflict of Interest List been provided for all individuals who have submitted a Biographical Sketch?

Does the Conflict of Interest list include the four categories as appropriate?